

OEM/NEIGHBORHOOD CAPTAIN PROGRAM

In response to the Sandy incident, the Watchung Mayor and Council have made numerous changes to improve the preparedness of the Borough in the event of another incident. Included among the improvements are a new website and Facebook page; upgraded telephone service; the installation of back-up generators for Borough Hall, the Police Station, and the Fire Department. The Borough also established and trained its first CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) members, responsible for providing support to the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Police in the event of an emergency.

Mayor Pote also has asked that the Borough establish an OEM “Neighborhood Captain Program”. This program is designed to identify and involve individual residents who would represent individual streets or neighborhoods. These individuals would be responsible for helping to ensure that effective two-way communication is established between the represented neighborhood and/or street and the Borough, in the event that power goes out for an extended period in neighborhoods and on streets in Watchung.

Specifically, this volunteer would be responsible for:

- Representing either a designated street or several streets or defined “neighborhood”.
- Communicating to the Borough any immediate issues or concerns that exist on the street(s) or neighborhood either after an incident (e.g. tornado or hurricane) or during an incident (e.g. power outage after a hurricane).
- Canvassing your street or neighborhood to understand if there are any specific individual needs that are not being met (individual might require oxygen or a trip to the doctor); we are not asking to resolve the problem, just to identify the issue.
- Meeting, as needed, at Borough Hall with other neighborhood or street captains to understand the current situation relating to any incident that has occurred in town.
- Assisting in the distribution of flyers and/or notices to your area.

Volunteers can at any time withdraw their position should their situation change and they are unable to assist.